

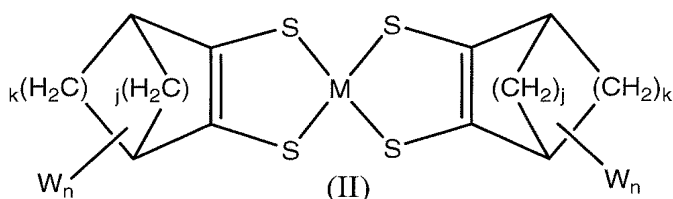
Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 – 17. (Cancelled).

18. (Currently Amended) ~~The A stabilized ink composition of claim 1 comprising an IR-absorbing metal-dithiolene dye and a singlet oxygen quencher, wherein the metal-dithiolene dye is of formula (II):~~



wherein:

M is selected from Ni, Pd or Pt;

j is selected from 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4;

k is selected from 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4;

n is selected from 0, 1, 2 or 3;

W is a hydrophilic group selected from the group comprising: a substituent comprising an ammonium group; a substituent comprising an acid group, including salts thereof; and a substituent comprising a sulfonamide group;

up to three $-(CH_2)-$ groups in the carbocycle may be optionally replaced by a group independently selected from $-C(O)-$, $-NH-$, $-S-$, $-O-$;

up to three $-CH-$ groups in the carbocycle may be optionally replaced by $-N-$;

up to four H atoms in the carbocycle may be optionally replaced by a group independently selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{5-12} aryl, C_{5-12} arylalkyl, halogen, hydroxyl or amino; and

provided that at least one of j or k is greater than 0.

19. (Original) The ink composition of claim 18, wherein M is Ni.

20. (Original) The ink composition of claim 18, wherein j is 1 and k is 2.

21. (Original) The ink composition of claim 18 comprising a $-C(C_{1-4} \text{ alkyl})_2-$ bridging group.

22. (Original) The ink composition of claim 18, wherein n is 1.

23. (Cancelled).

24. (Original) The ink composition of claim 18, wherein W is of formula $-(CH_2)_t-SO_3Z$, wherein t is 0 or an integer from 1 to 6, and Z is H or a water-soluble cation.

25. (Original) The ink composition of claim 18, wherein W is of formula $-CH_2SO_3H$, $-CH_2SO_3Na$ or $-CH_2SO_3K$.

26 – 54. (Cancelled).